

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Pursuant to paragraphs 4 and 5 on page 2 of the Office Action, please delete the title and insert the following on page 1, line 1:

~~SECURE DATA AUTHENTICATION APPARATUS~~
SECURE DATA AUTHENTICATION APPARATUS
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A FEATURE FILE

Pursuant to paragraph 7 on page 2 of the Office Action, please delete the subtitle and insert the following on page 6, line 13:

~~SOLUTION~~
BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Pursuant to paragraph 3 on page 2 of the Office Action, please make the following correction to the paragraph on page 2, beginning on line 2:

A security mechanism for computer equipment described by Thompson, (~~Apl. Ser. No. US Patent Application Serial No. 09/454,625~~) uses an encrypted password and a stored encryption key to validate the user's authorization to access the computer. When the computer is booted, the security routine executes first and prompts the user for a password, encrypts the password with the stored key, and compares the result with an encrypted form of the correct password that is stored in memory. If the encrypted passwords do not match, the boot is aborted and the computer is disabled.

Pursuant to paragraph 3 on page 2 of the Office Action, please make the following correction to the paragraph on page 5, beginning on line 9:

In the field of telephony switching systems, another method of preventing a customer from activating a feature that has not been paid for is described by Serkowski [L.] (~~Apl. Ser. No. US Patent~~

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Application Serial No. 09/357,679). In Serkowski, the telephony switching manufacturer or seller periodically sends an encrypted message to a licensed system to obtain the serial number of the microprocessor resident in the system, identify the version of software running on the system, and obtain a list of activated features. The information received from the telephony switching system is compared to the customer's stored license file. If there is a discrepancy in serial number or software version, the telephony switching system is not permitted to run. If the serial number and software version match, an encrypted message is sent to the telephony switching system granting it permission to run and listing the permitted features.

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